

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 271

By Dickerson

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Spencer Hays of Nashville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Spencer Hays; and

WHEREAS, Spencer Hays was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, born in Ardmore, Oklahoma, Spencer Hays was raised by his mother and grandmother in Gainesville, Texas; a star basketball player in high school, Mr. Hays won a basketball scholarship to Texas Christian University; and

WHEREAS, after marrying his high school sweetheart in his freshman year of college, Mr. Hays took a summer job with Southwestern/Great American Inc., selling Bibles door to door; and

WHEREAS, upon his graduation in 1959, Spencer Hays joined Southwestern in Nashville full time and rose through the ranks to become president and chief executive officer; under his leadership, the company expanded from selling only Bibles to also selling reference books, cookbooks, and children's books. At the time of his death, he held the position of executive chairman; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his duties at Southwestern, Mr. Hays founded the Tom James Company, which sells quality suits to men in their offices and homes; as the business grew, he bought suppliers and other clothing companies, which together became the Individualized Apparel Group. It is composed of sixteen companies, including Oxxford Clothes Inc. and Holland & Sherry, Ltd.; and

WHEREAS, Spencer Hays was a majority stockholder in Athlon Sports Communications Inc., in Nashville, which publishes sports annuals and *Parade* magazine; and

WHEREAS, known for his work ethic, business principles, generosity, and encouragement of others, Mr. Hays took pride in being a salesman, the title he still listed on his business card; throughout his career, he was known for his keen people sense and his ability to motivate and teach salespeople how to reach out to customers, saying "You can't build a business—you build people. People build a business."; and

WHEREAS, a great friend of France and the arts, Spencer Hays was co-chair of the board of directors of the American Friends of the Musée d'Orsay in Paris; in October 2016, he and his wife, Marlene, pledged more than 600 paintings from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to the museum, the biggest donation to a French gallery since World War II. Both Mr. and Mrs. Hays were named commanders of the Legion of Honor; and

WHEREAS, Spencer Hays was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Spencer Hays enjoyed the loving companionship of his wife of sixty years, Marlene Hays, and was the proud father of Julie Gaglione and Mary Alice (Scott) Hughes and the treasured grandfather of six grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Spencer Hays leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Spencer Hays, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Hays.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.